

# 2012 Indiana Deer Season Summary





*“Some people ask why men go hunting. They must be the kind of people who seldom get far from highways. What do they know of the tryst a hunting man keeps with the wind and the trees and the sky? Hunting? The means are greater than the end.”*  
—Gordon MacQuarrie, *Field and Stream*, 1939



# 2012 Indiana Deer Harvest Summary

## Contents

Overview.....	4
Bonus Antlerless Permits.....	5
Deer Harvested by Season.....	5
Harvest by Equipment Type.....	10
Harvest by License Status.....	11
Harvest Age and Sex Structure.....	11
Deer License Sales.....	12
Distribution of Harvest.....	13
Disease Monitoring.....	15



### Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program

This program supports state fish and wildlife agencies to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the hunting, sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities they provide. This program was initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid in Wildlife Act and created a system where by taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States.



## Overview

The 2012 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of four seasons: Archery (Oct. 1 to Jan. 6), Firearms (Nov. 17 to Dec. 2), Muzzleloader (Dec. 8-23), and for the first year, a Late Antlerless (Dec. 26 to Jan. 6) season in selected counties. Additionally, there was a youth-only season (Sept. 29-30) that was open to youths age 17 or younger who were accompanied by an adult at least 18 years old. The youth could take one either-sex deer during this special season.

The statewide archery bag limit was two deer. Hunters could take one deer per license for a total of either two antlerless deer or one antlered and one antlerless deer. A hunter could take only one antlered deer during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses. This was the first year that a crossbow was eligible for use through the entire archery season with the use of a crossbow license. Any deer taken with a crossbow counted towards the hunter's archery bag limit.

Archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each extra urban zone deer required a separate urban deer license, and hunters were required to harvest an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered deer if hunting with an urban deer license. The archery season in the urban deer zone opened two weeks prior to the opening of the early archery season on September 15 and continued through January 31. Archers were allowed to harvest up to either four antlerless deer or three antlerless and one antlered deer during this period. Any deer harvested during this period were in addition to all other bag limits.

The bag limit during firearms season was one antlered deer, and the bag limit for the muzzleloader season was one either-sex deer (maximum of one antlered deer harvested per hunter). A single firearms license was required to hunt with any firearm (shotgun, muzzleloader, rifle, or handgun) during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season.

The resident deer license fee was \$24 and the nonresident fee was \$150. This was the first year that a deer license bundle was available, with a resident fee of \$65 and a nonresident fee of \$295. The deer license bundle allowed hunters the opportunity to take two antlerless deer and one antlered deer across all seasons. When an agricultural advantage could be gained, resident landowners who hunted on land they owned were exempt from purchasing deer licenses, as were lessees who farmed the land. Deer could be checked in online or by phone for the first time in 2012, though traditional check stations remained active.

Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, Naval Surface Activity Crane, and Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center.



## Bonus Antlerless Permits

An unlimited number of bonus antlerless permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county. County bag limits ranged from A to 8 (Figure 1). Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters.

Each permit was valid for one antlerless deer, and hunters were allowed to take as many bonus antlerless deer as desired, as long as the county antlerless bag limits were observed.

Bonus antlerless permits cost \$24 and \$150 for the first permit for residents and nonresidents, respectively. The second and each additional permit was \$15 for residents and \$24 for nonresidents.

Bonus antlerless permits could be used during all deer hunting seasons except for “A”-designated counties, where the license could only be used beginning on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

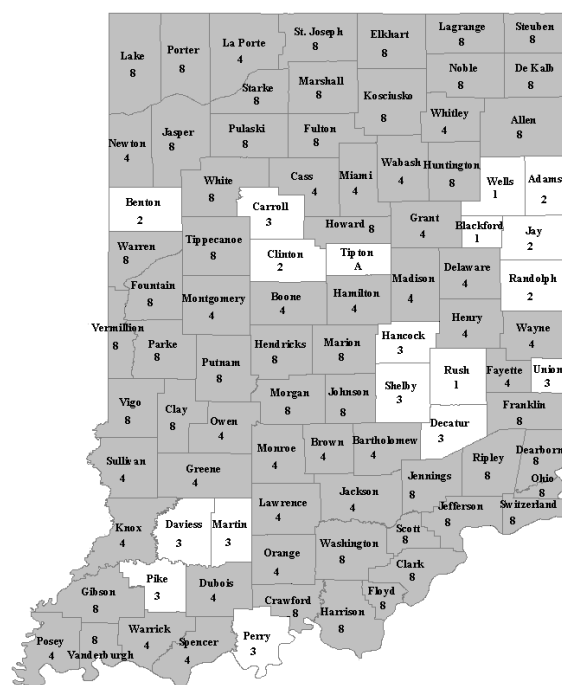
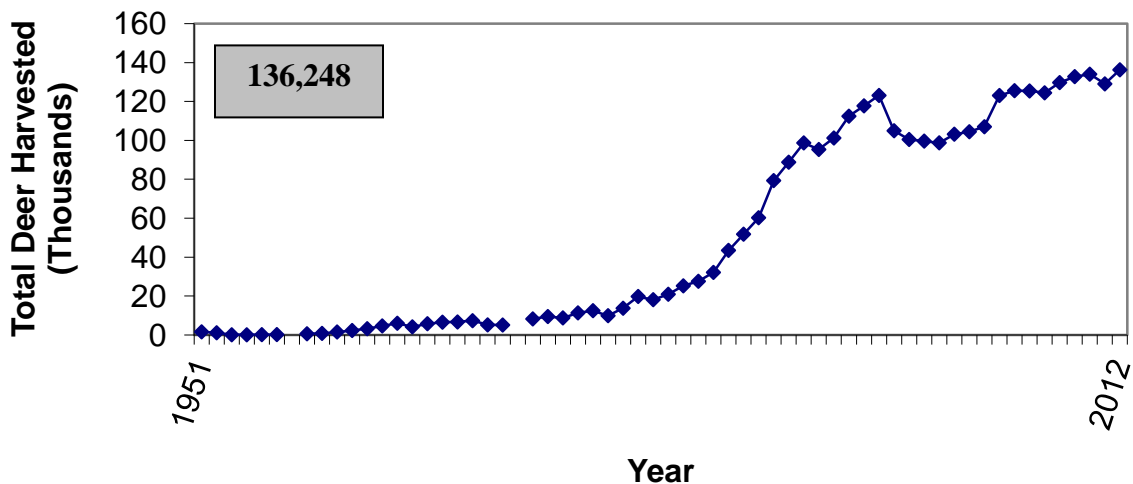


Figure 1. Antlerless deer bag limits in 2012. Shaded counties were eligible for the late antlerless season.

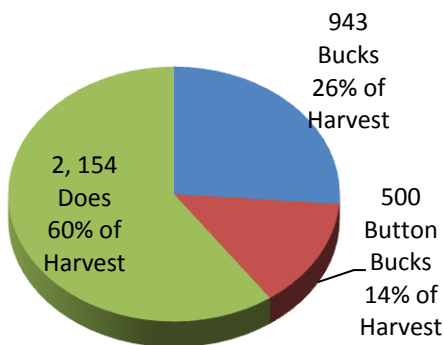
## Deer Harvested by Season

A total of 136,248 deer were reported harvested in Indiana during the 2012 season (Figure 2). This harvest was 6% higher than the 129,018 deer harvested during the 2011 season. The reported antlered deer harvest of 45,936 was 9% less than the 50,717 reported harvested in 2011. The antlerless harvest of 90,312 was 15% higher than the 78,301 harvested in 2011. In 2012, the reported harvest for total deer and antlerless deer ranks as highest reported kill for each category in Indiana history. The antlered harvest ranks sixteenth all-time.

Of the 136,248 deer reported this year, 82,151 were checked in at check stations, 53,389 were checked in online, and 708 were checked in via phone. The phone call-in system cost users \$3/reported animal. Approximately 3.13 million deer have been reported harvested during the past 61 deer hunting seasons in Indiana.



**Figure 2. The number of deer harvested in Indiana deer hunting seasons 1951-2012.**



**Figure 3. 2012 Youth Season harvest composition**

The hunting season began with urban deer zones (Sept. 15) followed by a youth only weekend (Sept. 25-26). This season was created in 2006 and allowed youths 15 years and younger to harvest one antlerless deer. It was changed in 2009 to include all youths 17 years and younger. This year was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year youths could harvest an antlered deer during this season, and the 1<sup>st</sup> year they could harvest more than one deer during the youth season. A total of 3,597 deer were reportedly harvested in 2012 during this season, an increase of 55% from the 2,319 in 2011. This season resulted in 2% of the total harvest (Table 1). Bucks made up 26% of the harvest, while 14% of the harvest was comprised of button bucks (Figure 3).

The historic break between early and late archery was eliminated this year, and results are reported as one continuous archery season. The archery season harvest (including Urban Deer Zones) of 36,033 deer comprised 26% of the total harvest and was 38% more than the 26,021 harvested in 2011 (Table 1). Antlerless deer comprised 66% of the total archery harvest, down 2 percentage points from 2011. Bucks made up 34% of the total harvest in archery season.





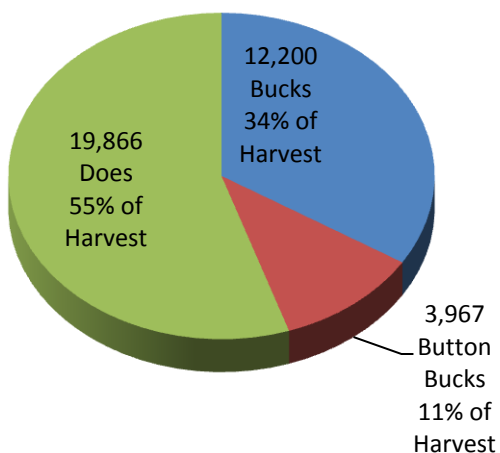


Figure 4. Archery Harvest composition in 2012



**Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2012 Indiana deer hunting season. Percent of total harvest in parentheses (totals may not be exactly 100 due to rounding).**

Season	Number of deer harvested		
	Antlered <sup>#</sup>	Antlerless	Total
Youth season (29-30 Sept)	943 (2)	2,654 (3)	3,597 (3)
Archery* (1 Oct - 6 Jan)	12,200 (27)	23,833 (26)	36,033 (26)
Firearms (17- 2 Dec)	29,652 (64)	44,835 (50)	74,487 (55)
Muzzleloader (8 - 23 Dec)	2,892 (6)	9,148 (10)	12,040 (9)
Late Antlerless** (26 Dec - 6 Jan)	249 (1)	9,842 (11)	10,091 (7)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>45,936</b>	<b>90,312</b>	<b>136,248</b>

\*Includes Urban Deer Zones

\*\*In 74 counties

#Includes shed buck harvest

The firearms season harvest of 74,487 deer was a decrease of nearly 7% from the 79,717 deer harvested in 2011 and comprised 55% of the total harvest (Table 1). The antlerless harvest of 44,835 was nearly 6% more than the 2011 antlerless harvest of 42,436, while the antlered harvest of 29,652 was 20% less than the antlered deer harvest in 2011 (37,281). Antlered deer made up at least half of the total harvest on only one day of firearm season (Nov. 19), while the harvest of antlerless deer outnumbered antlered deer during the remaining 15 days of the season (Table 2). During the opening weekend of firearms season, 50% of the total firearm season harvest occurred, up 8 percentage points from 42% in 2011. Opening weekend contributed to 27% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons, which is 1 percentage point more than the opening weekend harvest from 2011. Antlerless deer comprised 60% (81% of which were does) of the firearm season harvest (Figure 5).

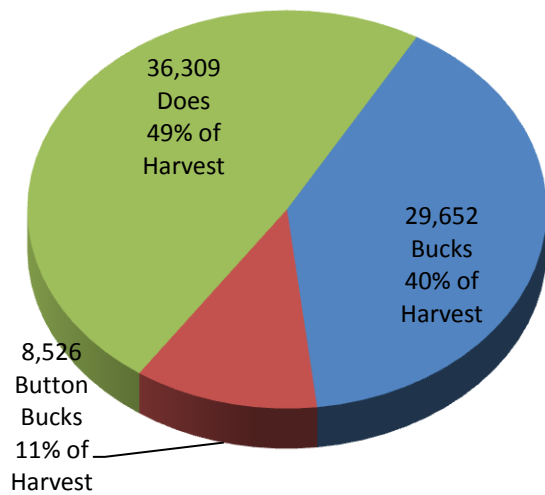


Figure 5. 2012 Firearms season harvest composition

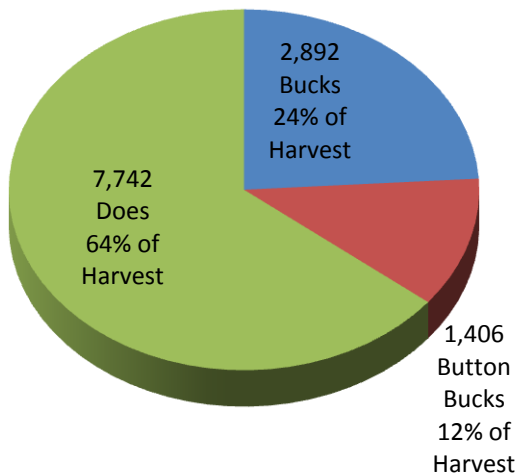
Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2012 Indiana firearm season (includes deer taken by bow, shotgun, pistol, rifle, and muzzleloader).

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	Daily %	N	Daily %	N	Total %
17 November	Sat	12,052	47	13,734	53	25,786	36
18 November	Sun	4,902	43	6,487	57	11,389	16
19 November	Mon	1,503	59	1,041	41	2,544	4
20 November	Tue	1,046	43	1,372	57	2,418	3
21 November	Wed	897	37	1,561	63	2,458	3
22 November	Thu	1,472	36	2,647	64	4,119	6
23 November	Fri	1,109	33	2,264	67	3,373	5
24 November	Sat	1,582	33	3,192	67	4,773	7
25 November	Sun	1,004	30	2,389	70	3,393	5
26 November	Mon	400	29	987	71	1,387	2
27 November	Tue	332	27	883	73	1,215	2
28 November	Wed	329	27	893	73	1,222	2
29 November	Thu	341	27	928	73	1,269	2
30 November	Fri	356	25	1,037	75	1,393	2
1 December	Sat	979	27	2,582	73	3,561	5
2 December	Sun	523	29	1,296	71	1,819	3
Totals*		28,828		43,292		72,120	100

\* Totals differ from those in previous table because date of harvest is not known for some registered deer and this table includes deer from both the firearms season and the last 16 days of the early archery season.

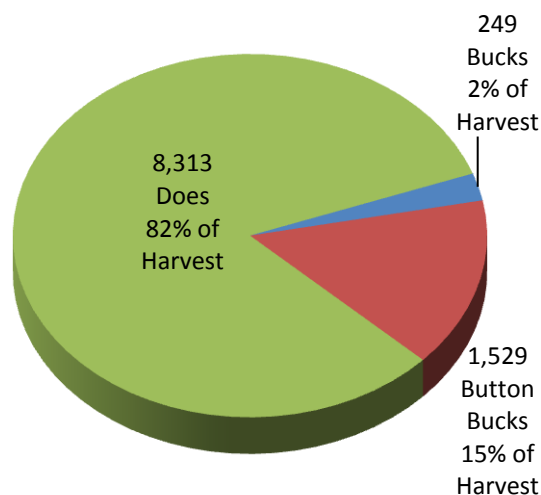


The muzzleloader season harvest of 12,040 comprised 9% of the total harvest, down 6 percentage points from last year (15% of total harvest in 2011) (Table 1). This year's reported muzzleloader season harvest was 38% lower than the 2011 muzzleloader harvest (19,235). As in years past, a large percentage of the deer harvested during the muzzleloader season were antlerless (78%) (Figure 6).



**Figure 6. 2012 Muzzleloader season harvest composition**

For the first time in 2012, Indiana held a late antlerless season in counties with a bonus county designation of 4 or more (Figure 1). A total of 74 counties met this criterion in 2012. The reported harvest during this season was 10,091, with 82% of the harvest reported as does (Figure 7). Just more than 2% of the harvest was reported as adult males who had already shed their antlers.



**Figure 7. 2012 Late antlerless season harvest composition**

## Harvest by Equipment Type

Six types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2012: archery, shotguns, muzzleloaders, handguns, crossbows, and rifles. Rifle cartridges were restricted to .357 diameter or larger bullet, and case length must be between 1.16 and 1.8 inches. Harvest by equipment type is illustrated in Figure 8. Shotgun harvest decreased 5% from 2011, while muzzleloader decreased 12%. Harvest by archery and handguns were nearly equal to 2011, while reported harvest by crossbow and rifle increased 675% and 49% from 2011, respectively (Table 3). This was the first year that crossbows were allowed to be used throughout the archery season without restriction, facilitating the rapid increase in use in 2012.

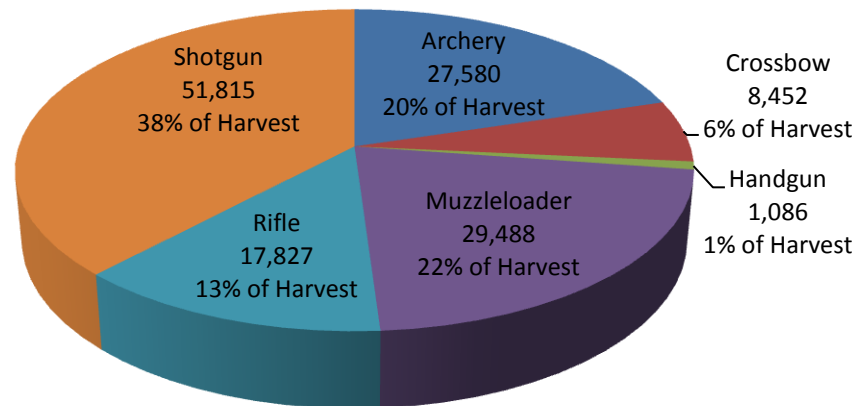


Figure 8. 2012 harvest by equipment type in Indiana

**Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2007-2012 seasons. Approximate percent of total harvest shown in parentheses.**

Equipment type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Archery*	26,187 (21)	26,369 (20)	28,497 (21)	27,186 (20)	26,715 (21)	27,580 (20)
Shotgun	63,919 (51)	68,520 (53)	65,839 (50)	61,920 (46)	54,683 (42)	51,815 (38)
Muzzleloader	30,740 (25)	30,295 (23)	32,745 (25)	33,527 (25)	33,571 (26)	29,488 (22)
Handgun	1,615 (1)	1,949 (2)	1,932 (1)	1,318 (1)	1,028 (1)	1,086 (1)
Rifle	1,203 (1)	1,788 (1)	2,809 (2)	9,125 (7)	11,930 (9)	17,827 (13)
Crossbow	763 (1)	827 (1)	930 (1)	928 (1)	1,091 (1)	8,452 (6)
Totals	124,427	129,748	132,752	134,004	129,018	136,248

\* Crossbow harvest is not included in archery harvest. Values within this table do not exactly equal those tallied by season (page 3) due to the fact that multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season. Muzzleloaders may also be used during both the firearm and muzzleloader season. Additionally, differences arise due to the different methods required to analyze data when either the equipment or the season is unknown.

## Harvest by License Status

Licensed resident hunters (lifetime, resident, and youth license holders) accounted for over 82% of the total deer harvest (Table 4).

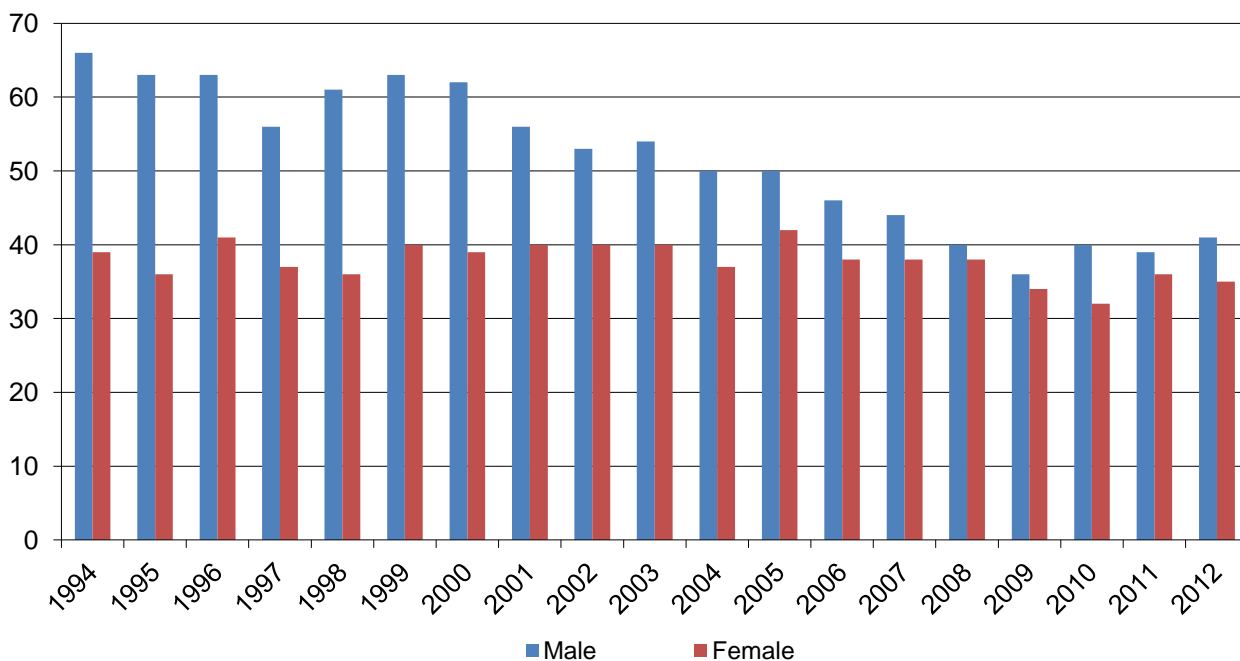
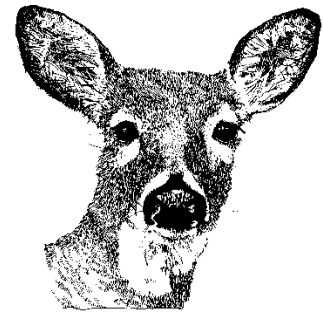
Licensed nonresident hunters harvested over 2% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer hunting license (resident plus non-resident) took only ~50% of the total deer harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e. lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners/tenants, and military personnel) took nearly 50% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for ~14.7% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, nearly 99% were taken by landowners/tenants while only 1% were taken by military personnel on leave.

**Table 4. Harvest distribution of deer by license type during 2012 hunting season.**

License Status	Deer Harvested	Percent of Harvest
Resident	64,577	47.40
Lifetime	34,621	25.41
Land Owner	19,635	14.41
Youth	13,394	9.83
Nonresident	3,773	2.77
Military	248	0.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>136,248</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Harvest Age and Sex Structure

The age and sex structure of the 2012 deer harvest was 34% adult males (antlered bucks), 40% adult females, 12% male fawns (button bucks), and 14% female fawns (Table 5). The proportion of reported antlered deer in the harvest is the lowest in Indiana's history. About 41% of the antlered bucks and 35% of the adult does harvested during 2012 were yearlings (1.5 years old) (Figure 9).



**Figure 9. Proportion of male and female yearlings in the harvest (1.5 years old), as determined by aging during the first weekend of the firearms season, for years 1994-2012.**



**Table 5. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2012, as determined from mandatory check stations.**

Year	Adults		Fawns		Total
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	
1989	40,503 (51)	19,464 (24)	10,737 (14)	8,614 (11)	79,318
1990	43,080 (48)	23,680 (27)	12,373 (14)	9,630 (11)	88,763
1991	41,593 (42)	31,211 (32)	14,626 (15)	11,253 (11)	98,683
1992	43,508 (46)	25,387 (27)	14,262 (15)	12,157 (13)*	95,314
1993	44,424 (44)	27,704 (27)	14,751 (15)	14,335 (14)*	101,214
1994	50,812 (45)	32,466 (29)	15,487 (14)	13,651 (12)*	112,416
1995	47,098 (40)	40,946 (35)	16,398 (14)	13,287 (11)*	117,729
1996	47,315 (38)	39,913 (32)	17,307 (14)	18,551 (15)*	123,086
1997	42,537 (41)	35,163 (34)	14,039 (13)	13,198 (12)*	104,937
1998	44,955 (45)	30,711 (31)	12,257 (12)	12,538 (12)*	100,461
1999	46,371 (46)	30,474 (31)	11,645 (12)	11,129 (11)*	99,618
2000	44,621 (45)	31,986 (32)	11,072 (11)	11,046 (11)*	98,725
2001	48,357 (47)	31,806 (31)	11,230 (11)	11,770 (11)*	103,163
2002	47,177 (45)	35,357 (34)	11,291 (11)	10,603 (10)*	104,428
2003	49,533 (46)	36,303 (34)	10,262 (10)	10,887 (10)*	106,986
2004	54,743 (44)	41,749 (34)	12,501 (10)	14,065 (11)*	123,058
2005	52,488 (42)	44,286 (35)	13,030 (10)	15,722 (13)*	125,526
2006	49,097 (39)	45,257 (36)	13,688 (11)	17,339 (14)*	125,381
2007	49,375 (40)	44,514 (36)	13,313 (11)	17,225 (14)*	124,427
2008	50,845 (39)	46,666 (36)	13,083 (11)	19,154 (15)*	129,748
2009	52,878 (40)	48,222 (36)	13,040 (10)	18,291 (14)*	132,431
2010	53,007 (40)	49,911 (37)	13,367 (10)	17,719 (13)*	134,004
2011	50,717 (39)	45,931 <sup>†</sup> (36)	13,058 (10)	19,312 <sup>†</sup> (15)*	129,018
2012	45,936 <sup>#</sup> (34)	54,983 (40)	15,911 (12)	19,418 (14)*	136,248

\* Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the % fawns of all females aged at the biological check stations (not from the ratio of fawn doe to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest).

† Correction from 2011

# Includes shed antlered deer

## Deer License Sales

Deer license sales decreased this year from 2011 by 28% (Table 6), but the number of privileges (number of deer legally allowed to be harvested) increased by 15% due to the addition of the bundle license, which allows for the taking of up to 3 deer per license sold. Due to the popularity of the bundle license, other license sales fell sharply in 2012.

**Table 6. Deer license sales in Indiana by type, 2009-2011\*.**

	2010	2011	2012
Deer License Bundle	n/a	n/a	56,606
Resident Archery/Crossbow/Urban	59,473	60,844	33,428
Resident Firearm	102,626	103,284	57,092
Resident Muzzleloader	21,975	23,956	7,883
Resident Military/Refuge	2,541	3,138	1,413
Resident Bonus Antlerless	70,673	73,287	32,403
Nonresident	11,197	11,889	10,717
Youth	38,330	39,030	39,389
Total (excluding Youth)	268,485	276,398	199,542

\*Total numbers subject to change slightly via refunds or voids



## **Distribution of the Harvest**

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 100 in Tipton County to 3,505 in Switzerland County (Table 7). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 63 counties; 2,000 deer in 21 counties; and 3,000 deer in five counties. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 in three counties (down from five in 2011 and nine in 2010), while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 42 counties compared with 31 in 2011. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 90 of the state's 92 counties in 2012 compared with 91 counties in 2011. The counties with the highest harvests were Switzerland, Dearborn, Harrison, Franklin, Steuben, Parke, Washington, Kosciusko, Marshall, and Noble. The counties with the lowest harvests were Tipton, Benton, Blackford, Hancock, Rush, Clinton, Shelby, Wells, Marion, and Howard.



**Table 6. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2012 (after adjustment for unknowns).**

<u>Number Harvested</u>				<u>Number Harvested</u>			
County	Antlered <sup>#</sup>	Antlerless	Total	County	Antlered <sup>#</sup>	Antlerless	Total
Adams	194	375	569	Lawrence	792	1,433	2,225
Allen	574	1,204	1,778	Madison	215	448	663
Bartholomew	408	893	1,301	Marion	103	349	452
Benton	76	67	143	Marshall	838	1,989	2,827
Blackford	103	197	300	Martin	577	958	1,535
Boone	208	358	566	Miami	521	1,079	1,600
Brown	627	1,402	2,029	Monroe	561	1,055	1,616
Carroll	348	583	931	Montgomery	495	788	1,283
Cass	527	868	1,395	Morgan	443	909	1,352
Clark	696	1,201	1,897	Newton	399	566	965
Clay	421	821	1,242	Noble	807	1,969	2,776
Clinton	151	232	383	Ohio	364	823	1,187
Crawford	769	1,406	2,175	Orange	714	1,391	2,105
Daviess	416	753	1,169	Owen	641	1,129	1,770
Dearborn	923	2,253	3,176	Parke	941	1,954	2,895
Decatur	288	508	796	Perry	722	957	1,679
DeKalb	747	1,672	2,419	Pike	548	791	1,339
Delaware	265	482	747	Porter	443	1,199	1,642
Dubois	639	1,350	1,989	Posey	525	798	1,323
Elkhart	476	1,079	1,555	Pulaski	705	1,291	1,996
Fayette	330	645	975	Putnam	647	1,309	1,956
Floyd	250	474	724	Randolph	263	377	640
Fountain	604	1,084	1,688	Ripley	710	1,480	2,190
Franklin	926	2,152	3,078	Rush	145	194	339
Fulton	604	1,289	1,893	St. Joseph	484	931	1,415
Gibson	563	1,058	1,621	Scott	345	728	1,073
Grant	275	527	802	Shelby	173	262	435
Greene	632	1,347	1,979	Spencer	538	894	1,432
Hamilton	180	430	610	Starke	584	1,341	1,925
Hancock	129	197	326	Steuben	1,005	2,071	3,076
Harrison	1,029	2,064	3,093	Sullivan	748	1,317	2,065
Hendricks	292	470	762	Switzerland	1,135	2,371	3,506
Henry	223	362	585	Tippecanoe	474	984	1,458
Howard	172	334	506	Tipton	54	46	100
Huntington	395	694	1,089	Union	172	355	527
Jackson	714	1,445	2,159	Vanderburgh	255	711	966
Jasper	580	1,053	1,633	Vermillion	458	807	1,265
Jay	300	618	918	Vigo	603	1,006	1,609
Jefferson	808	1,518	2,326	Wabash	533	1,167	1,700
Jennings	695	1,582	2,277	Warren	493	1,007	1,500
Johnson	226	440	666	Warrick	628	1,061	1,689
Knox	372	467	839	Washington	958	1,936	2,894
Kosciusko	890	1,980	2,870	Wayne	432	700	1,132
Lagrange	617	1,430	2,047	Wells	196	243	439
Lake	434	874	1,308	White	403	922	1,325
La Porte	619	1,233	1,852	Whitley	417	747	1,164

# includes shed antlered deer



## *Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease*

A photograph showing a dead cow lying on its side on a grassy bank next to a river. The cow's body is light brown and white, and it appears to be dead. The river is visible on the right side of the image, with some greenery and trees in the background.



### ***Chronic Wasting Disease***

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is one of a group of diseases called Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, which is a variant of scrapie in sheep and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. The agents of CWD are called prions which are abnormal, protease-resistant forms of cellular proteins normally synthesized in the central nervous system and lymphoid tissues. Prions that cause CWD are highly resistant to heat or disinfectant. No study has ever proven that CWD is transmissible to humans.

CWD has been reported in Wisconsin, Illinois, West Virginia, and most recently Texas, among other states. In 2002, Indiana created a monitoring program to detect the presence of CWD, which focused on removing the obex or the retropharyngeal gland from random hunter harvested deer throughout the state (active surveillance). Reports of outwardly noticeable sick deer are also tested (targeted surveillance). This monitoring continues today, as well as testing random samples of road killed deer which was instituted in 2007.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife's 2012 CWD sampling effort collected 1,051 deer from hunter harvested and road killed deer. Lab results are still pending at press time. CWD has not been detected in over 12,200 deer during this monitoring period (2002-present).

### ***Bovine Tuberculosis***

The Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife, along with the Indiana Board of Animal Health and the United States Department of Agriculture, participated in the collection and testing of free ranging white-tailed deer for Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) in 2012. A total of 229 deer were sampled from Franklin, Fayette, and Dearborn County, and analysis from Purdue Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory is complete and failed to detect the presence of TB in any free ranging deer this year. Indiana has tested over 1,100 deer for TB during the past three years and has failed to detect the presence of TB in the free ranging deer herd.

For more information on deer health, visit [www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild](http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild).

